

ABOUT NATURAL GAS

Prof. White, of the West Virginia University, Says There is No Necessity Boring Deeper Than 3,800 Feet—Opinion of an Expert and Eminent Geologist.

To the Editor of the *Intelligencer*.
 Sir:—I observe that your proposition in

to sinking the La Belle gas well to a depth greater than 2,000 feet is about to bear fruit. Speaking as one who has made the

natural gas question a special study, I would advise you to recall the suggestion of going deeper, for if geological science can give any answer worthy of credence, the money expended in boring the La Balle area can be well justified.

wheeling, deeper than 2,000 feet, will be spent in vain, so far as obtaining a supply of natural gas is concerned. The reason for this statement is based on the following facts: Large supplies of natural gas, just like oil, must have a reservoir to con-

in a coarse, soft, pebbly sandstone which holds the gas or oil, as the case may be, just as a sponge holds water. Unless such a porous reservoir be present in the depths of the earth the gas supply will not last, even if a strong vein should be struck, as witnesses the recent Texas Gas Troubles.

Now the geologist knows in a fairly accurate way the character of the rocks below a depth of 2,000 feet at Wheeling just as well before as he will after the drill has penetrated them, and any respectable geologist will tell you that below its depth at Wheeling no coarse, porous beds capable of holding any considerable supply of gas would be encountered if the drill should penetrate the earth even to the depth of a mile; in fact the rocks for the next 2,000 feet are all of the same

During May of last year the writer examined the territory in the vicinity of Wheeling in a professional capacity for some parties who were interested in promoting natural gas. With great reluctance, I was obliged to condemn the region for gas territory within a radius of ten miles from the city, which is as far as my

own since that opinion was given, have so far only confirmed its correctness, and hence it would seem futile to waste any more capital in drilling for gas near Wheeling, and hopelessly so when a depth of 800 feet has been passed.

It looks as though Wheeling would have to go away from home for natural gas, if he gets any, and in this connection a word of warning to those capitalists who think of laying a pipe line to Wellsburg may not be amiss. There are grave doubts as to

pressure sufficiently strong to overcome the friction in a pipe line eighteen miles long, and deliver a sufficient quantity of gas in Wheeling to make the investment a paying one. Certainly no well that shows pressure of much less than 200 pounds could be considered strong enough to pipe its gas so far. However, if the Wellburg region can not be drawn on for

back upon the Washington county wells, and these are being piped to Pittsburgh, which is further away from them than Wheeling.

The great importance of this subject to our city must be my excuse for this communication.

I. C. WHITE.
Morgantown, W. Va., Jan. 10.

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—A.T.T.—

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